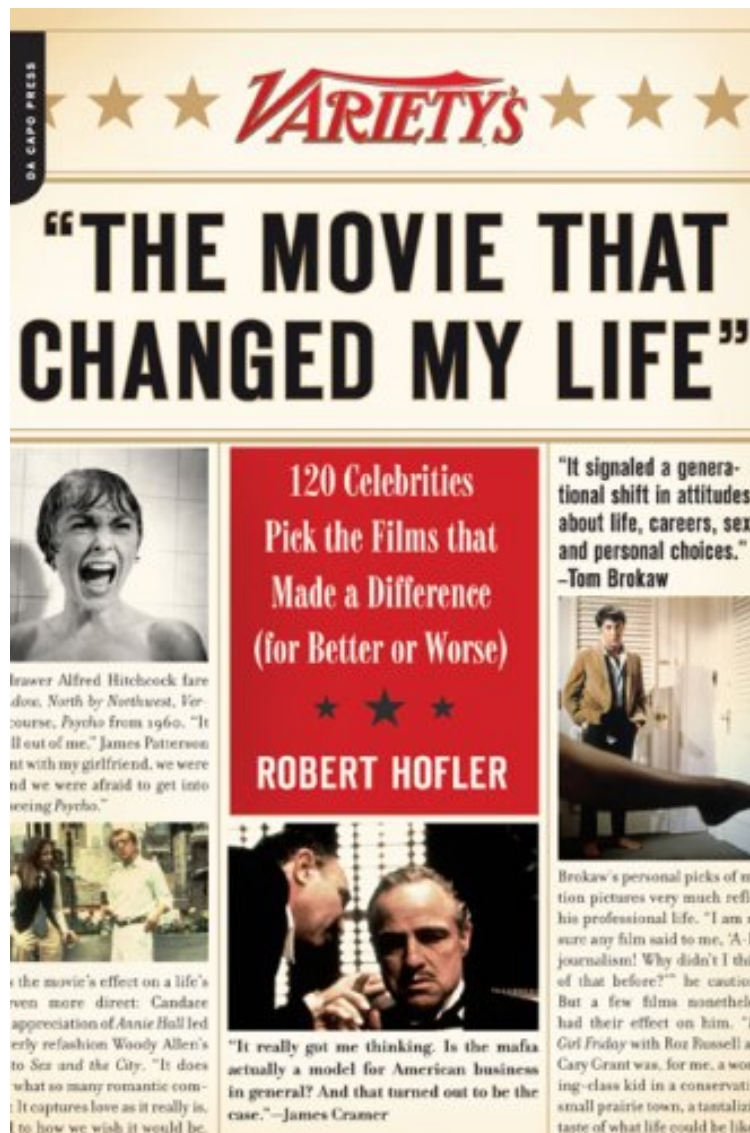


(Read now) Variety's "The Movie That Changed My Life": 120 Celebrities Pick the Films that Made a Difference (for Better or Worse)

Variety's "The Movie That Changed My Life": 120 Celebrities Pick the Films that Made a Difference (for Better or Worse)

Robert Hofler

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Robert Hofler : Variety's "The Movie That Changed My Life": 120 Celebrities Pick the Films that Made a Difference (for Better or Worse) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Variety's "The Movie That Changed My Life": 120 Celebrities Pick the Films that Made a Difference (for Better or Worse):

7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating for film buffs, great ideas for Family Movie Night for parents

By Jesse Kornbluth

Ask a public figure of a certain age about the most significant film he ever saw --- note: "a public figure of a certain age" is overwhelmingly likely to be male --- and if he doesn't name "It's a Wonderful Life" he'll tell you about "To Kill a Mockingbird."

"How interesting," you think. "You admire Atticus Finch?" "Oh, very much. A safe answer: Gregory Peck's character in the film is, in fact, the most admired man in American film." "You do recall that Atticus Finch took the case knowing he'd lose, yes?" Slight confusion here on the part of the public figure. "Can you tell me, sir," you ask, "when you took on a cause knowing it was the right thing to do --- and knowing you couldn't prevail?"

The public figure suddenly remembers he must make an urgent call. For that reason alone, I much prefer the format of the feature that "Variety" invented: 20 celebrated Americans chatting at some length about their favorites. These public figures are divided into 15 categories --- romantics, comedians, fashionistas, doctors and lawyers, Wall Streeters, athletes, historians, and more. There are only a few politicians on the list, and one of them, John McCain, happily turns out to be a real film buff. And there is only one language-challenged respondent, who is, not surprisingly, Donald Trump.

The value of "The Movie That Changed My Life: 120 Celebrities Pick the Films that Made a Difference" is not just anecdotal, though it's immensely enjoyable to read Isaac Mizrahi rave about the dresses in "Imitation of Life" and Steve Carell rhapsodize about seeing his first semi-clothed female in "Ryan's Daughter". It's far more useful as a field guide to old movies that you ought to be renting or buying --- unless, that is, your weekend is made joyous by "The Fast and the Furious 10" or "Terminator 12".

Dave Barry reminded me of the great depth in "Animal House". Kurt Vonnegut had a unique appreciation of "Bridge Over the River Kwai". I had no idea Valerie Plame Wilson's brother fought in Vietnam --- which explains her special interest in "Born on the Fourth of July". Tim Gunn reminds me I want to see "Blowup" again. Veronica Webb sends me back to "Two for the Road". And Nicole Kidman makes me want to revisit "Breaking the Waves," the movie that broke my heart in 1996. I loved that John Waters makes a strong case for Margaret Hamilton in "Wizard of Oz". Of course Jack Nicholson talks about "On the Waterfront". Dominick Dunne's interest in "Compulsion" and "Now, Voyager" is as personal as you might expect --- and he shares all, of course. Paul Krugman sees "Chinatown" as a business movie. But Perez Hilton and "Willie Wonka"? Surprise: his reasons make sense. Serious people have surprising choices. A noted art curator, now at Sotheby's, praises Andy Warhol's "Trash". Neil deGrasse Tyson, director of the Hayden Planetarium, votes for "All That Jazz". In each case, the background is as fascinating as the choice. We're talking here about films these people saw when they were young and impressionable. So if you're a parent and your kids are gaga over Hannah Montana and her ilk, this book may be especially helpful. Rent one of these classics, show it on Family Movie Night and don't ask anything deeper than "battered or plain".

As you reconnect with greatness, you might just be bending the twig.

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Definitely, try this at Home

By Roger D. Launius

These kind of books are always fun. What movies do various celebrities, politicians, authors, athletes, show business types, robber barons, and others famous for being famous like? What influenced them, and how did these films affect their careers? Answers to these questions are offered in this book, but certainly not in a depth that would satisfy anyone with reading habits any more in depth than "People" magazine. A lot of films get mentioned here, and some of them among the greatest ever made, but the answers offered for why they are revered by those naming them is as shallow or as thoughtful as the person offering the remarks. A lot of the time, it seems from this book, those reflections are pretty simplistic. I don't know if this is the result of a general loss of depth of society as a whole or perhaps the lack of sophistication of the author bringing these thoughts together. Whatever the case, "Variety's The Movie That Changed My Life," is an enjoyable but not very thought provoking romp through recent film history.

Some of the films that made important impacts on this group of celebrities were surprises. "To Kill a Mockingbird" is a powerful film, to be sure, but I was surprised that so many people of substance--such as Howard Dean, Robert Kennedy Jr., and Gloria Allred -found its message something that they sought to inculcate into their own lives. The same is true for "All the President's Men" and "Chinatown." Dr. Phil MacGraw was the only person to hold up "Judgment at Nuremberg," and I applaud his choice but wish more in our political leadership would embrace it and its perspective on good and evil. It is not surprising, although it is disappointing, that Perez Hilton loved "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" and that Newt Gingrich adored the John Wayne/John Ford cavalry trilogy ("Fort Apache," "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon," and "Rio Grande." Certainly understandable, singers and dancers tended to like musicals, athletes tended to like sports movies, and comedians often celebrated comedies.

"Variety's The Movie That Changed My Life" is an enjoyable way of spending a couple of stray hours. It doesn't take long to read this book, and staying with it more than an afternoon is a waste of time, so have a good time. Don't take it too seriously. After all, just as interesting and insightful book could have been written by taking a poll of random people on the street or at a summer cookout. In fact, try that. The next time you have a party, ask each of your guests what were three of the most influential movies they have ever seen. I think you and your guests will find the result fascinating.

4 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Expose yourself to cinema you've been ignoring

By Bette

This type of book is, by now, almost a cliché, but the format works. Famous folks write brief essays regarding the movie that changed their lives, or had some significant impact. I like to use books like this as ways to expose myself to cinema I have ignored all of my life. For instance, I have thus far been encouraged (via the book) to watch McLintock, Splendor in the Grass and Water. I'm certainly not going to give a book

like this more than 3 stars, for the simple fact that it took little skill to write and edit. Use the book as a tool. Expose yourself to films you previously deemed "not my thing."

In recent years, the editors of *Variety* have posed the same question to hundreds of famous personalities: What is the movie that changed your life? Gathered here for the first time are the responses of movie stars and comedians, politicians and war correspondents, athletes and business magnates, and many more. We discover Candace Bushnell's appreciation of *Annie Hall*, which she refashioned into *Sex and the City*; Sen. John McCain's quote-laden adoration of *Viva Zapata!*; and journalists Tom Brokaw and Lawrence Wright's disparate inspirations, *His Gal Friday* and *All the Presidents Men*. From Sarah Jessica Parker to Ralph Nader, Bill Maher to Jerry Rice, Donald Trump to Jesse Jackson, Danielle Steel to Gore Vidal, this fascinating and entertaining collection reveals the films that have left their mark on the individuals shaping our world.

Augusta Metro Spirit, 2/18/09 Readers will get to hear fascinating stories concerning the effects of some of the more popular films to ever be displayed. Comedies, dramas, action and chick flicks all make an appearance to the delight of a diverse film palette. A sensitive narrative collection that offers a different view of the movies we watch, we collect, and we love. A treasure trove for the film fanatic. *Deseret News*, 3/1/09 This collection shows the power film has to deeply influence careers, causes, dreams, attitudes and romantic sensibilities, shaping who we are and how we see ourselves. January, 3/5/09 A fairly impossible book not to like in that it offers up something for everyone. Well, everyone who likes movies. And celebrities. It's a good idea that has been well executed. I couldn't put it down. Hofler doesn't just plunk down their answers, but rather puts together brief profiles that places their choices for life-altering movies in context. Hofler's book offers up a concise and vivid image of what goes on in the heart of contemporary celebrity. It's a tremendously enjoyable book. *InfoDad.com*, 3/5/09 Hofler's book is fun, and it's quite easy to read. Each entry takes only a page or two, and there are plenty of illustrations from the films mentioned. Often entertaining in the way that minor movies can themselves be. *Zink*, March 2009 120 truly intimate interviews [A] fascinating collection. *Los Angeles Times Jacket Copy book blog*, 3/16/09 The snippets of conversation are amusing, and for a casual movie viewer, a nice guide to some outstanding films of the past. *Buffalo News*, 3/8/09 Interesting, very, very interesting. *Tucson Citizen*, 3/18/09 [A] fascinating book. *Bookgasm.com*, 3/16/09 [Hofler] has assembled high-wattage responses by their professions, whether comedians, athletes, politicians or even fashion mavens. This kind of book is virtually critic-proof, as it does exactly what it says it will do. *Monsters and Critics*, 3/23/09 This fascinating and entertaining collection reveals the films that have left their mark on the individuals shaping our world. *Skyscraper*, Spring 2009 Hofler compiles engaging glimpses into the minds of sports stars, politicians, humorists, directors, musicians, journalists, writers, and other VIPs, finding out what motion pictures have had an impact, negative or positive, on their lives, their hopes, even their nightmares. What makes this collection of anecdotes, insights, and impressions so readable is the unexpected choices. Easy to skim through. Encapsulates what movies mean to everyone, celebrity or not, without belaboring the point, and recognizes all sorts of people, from opera directors to quarterbacks, can be disturbed, uplifted or transformed by the silver screen. *Curled Up with a Good Book* If you are a movie addict, this book will ring your chimes. The best thing about it is that it reaches across so many genres, age groups, vintages, and viewpoints. It's nicely organized and spiced with many photos to remind us of the monumental films and the stellar actors of the past 70 years. [It's] the kind of book you can carry around and thumb through at random. Great reading for the doctor's office or a weekend getaway. *Hudson Valley News*, 4/1/09 Wonderful photos throughout. *Book Bargains and Previews* This fascinating and entertaining collection reveals the films that have left their mark on the individuals shaping our world. *Magill Book*, October 2009 What is surprising is the number and range of people deeply affected by the movies, in surprising and perceptive ways. A revealing read.